(e) The Government has taken various measures to reduce oil imports and to increase the domestic production of oil, which are as follows:

(i) Carving out more and more areas for exploration for offer under various rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

(ii) Quicker development of discovered reserves for enabling commencement of production.

(iii) Use of stimulation techniques for increasing production from existing fields.

(iv) Application of Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) techniques for increasing recovery factor from existing fields.

(v) Arresting decline from ageing fields.

(vi) Acquisition of exploration acreages and oil producing properties overseas to bring in equity oil.

(vii) Substitution of oil in the transport sector through use of alternative fuels such as Bio-diesel, ethanol, blended-petrol etc.

(viii) Diversification of the sources for procurement of crude. The Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are now importing crude oil from about 25 countries either on term contract or through spot purchase.

(ix) Construction of a Strategic Storage of crude oil of 5 MMT capacity at three locations *viz.* Visakhapatnam, Mangalore and Padur for meeting unforeseen situations arising out of short term supply disruptions etc.

Reservation for SCs/STs and OBCs in ONGC

3817. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of reservation for SCs/STs and OBCs at the time of recruitment of employees and officers in the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC);

(b) the details of quota at all India level and regional level for reserved category; and

(c) whether there is reservation for SCs/STs and OBCs at the time of promotions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) The instructions & guidelines issued by Government of India from time to time for the reservation for SCs/STs & OBCs in direct recruitment are followed in ONGC.

The reservation percentage for direct recruitment in ONGC is as follows:

Group 'A' Officers:

(i) SC-15%, ST-7.5% & OBC-27% through open-competition on All India basis.

(ii) SC-16.66%, ST-7.5% and OBC-25.84% for recruitment other than open competition on All India basis.

Group B: It is promotional post in ONGC.

Group 'C' & 'D' post (staff):

Posts are reserved for SCs/STs/OBCs for recruitment as and when vacancies arise, as per GOI instructions applicable for different states.

(c) Promotions in ONGC are akin to time bound promotions up to E-4 level and hence no reservation is envisaged. Under this growth oriented promotion policy, all eligible employees who are otherwise fit, are considered for promotion to next higher grades after putting in the specified years of service irrespective of the number of vacancies. Hence no reservation for SC/ST adopted in promotion upto E-4.

There is no reservation in promotion at the level of E-5 and above and this is done strictly on merit cum selection. However certain concession are available in judging merit.

Black marketing of LPG cylinders

3818. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of large scale of black marketing and diversion of domestic LPG cylinders for commercial purposes;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to involve or take co-operation of the general public to curb/check such malpractices;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the initiatives taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) The possibility of black marketing/diversion of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

In order to stop black marketing/diversion of domestic LPG cylinders, the Government has enacted "Liquified Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000" and formulated "Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001" which provides for penal action against LPG distributors indulging in diversion/black marketing of LPG.

Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributor(s) in accordance with the provisions of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG). MDG provides for following action against the distributor:—

- Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.
- Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence.
- Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Governments are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against black marketing/diversion of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measures Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors found black marketing/diversion of LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the black marketing/diversion of domestic cylinders for unauthorized usage.